GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF FAMILY FARE IN BANG CHAN

261 701 As we turn to a detailed description of the family fare, we should like to point out that starvation was unknown in Bang Chan. Although much room remains for improvement in 731 diet, "hollow hunger" was uncommon. In the few times when disastrous flood destroyed the year's crop, the government was able to provide enough rice so that it need not be ra- 133 tioned. People still ate their fill. Even floods had their 226 advantage: one could fish out the window. That gross caloric undernutrition was rare was borne out by examination of the 146 school children (Hauck, 1956). "On the average . . . Bang 145 Chan children could not be considered as markedly under- weight. Few were so thin that one could 'count their ribs' and still fewer would be considered plump by American 141 standards." In a random sample of village households that included about 10% of the population, the heaviest man weighed 69 kg. (151.8 pounds) and the heaviest woman 70 kg. (154 pounds). We noted no more than half a dozen adults who appeared to be "overweight." Most were middle aged or older, and none of them did strenuous field work.

Sources of Food

Home Production, Storage and Preservation

262 Rice. - Rice is an essential part of any Thai meal. 256 The majority of the rice farmers in Bang Chan had rice for [25] home consumption milled for them at Minburi. In general, they took their own paddy to the mill, and brought the resulting milled rice home, where it was stored in a box or mat-bin. Although, according to a recent survey (Goldsen and Ralis, 1957) nearly a third of the households owned a home rice mill, undermilled or home-pounded rice was not widely [26] used in Bang Chan. Information on this point was obtained for 333 of 336 "kitchen-unit"[1] households in the village. Of these 5 consumed home-milled rice only, 51 used home-milled rice in major part, 78 in minor part, and 199 not at all.

221 In households where home-milled rice was used, during 256 June enough would be pounded to last until harvest, at which time hands were sore and bleeding from the field work and 505 home pounding was impossible. At the time when data for the 256 present report were being gathered, most families took paddy to the mill when water in the canal was high enough so that it could be transported by boat. If a farmer on a subsidiary

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[293] 1. In some large houses, two related family groups lived together but maintained separate kitchens.